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- Largest Pathfinder Club in Mexico pays tribute to its founder Eliezer Melendez

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Posted: 25 Apr 2011 09:00 PM PDT
The Division Pathfinder Club, Inter-American's largest club from Montemorelos University Church, paid tribute to Pastor Eliezer Melendez last Friday at the 3rd territory-wide camporee in Mexico City.

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Pathfinders participate in Mega Band for the Camporee

Inter-American Division > Communication Department
Libna Stevens
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April 26, 2011 - Mexico City, Mexico... Benjamin Garcia/IAD

About 130 pathfinders from various places of Mexico and other countries made up the Mega Band for the Camporee which enriched the worship service and presented a concert Sabbath afternoon.

The invitation to be part of the Mega Band was launched in February this year through Montemorelos University virtual page umtuclub.com. From there, participants could download the music for the parts to be played.


At just 13 years of age, Josue Israel Roblero who plays the flute and is from Mexico City, knew of the activity through his dad and realized his dream of playing in band. "I felt good because I met people who played the same instrument I play," said in the interview while his grandma watched him with tears in her eyes after seeing him play in the mega band.

Ismael Isaac Jean, who played tenor sax, studied two years at École Nationale de Musique de Haiti, and found out about the Mega Band through a friend. He said it is something he will never forget.

Although she does not belong to a club, Eunice Grijlve, who played first clarinet, came from Houston to be part of the Mega Band. She learned about it through Facebook.

Fany Friego (transversal flute), Ingrid Cadenas (alto sax), Abi Lopez (transversal flute), David Mena (French horn) and Harold Chin (baritone sax), a group from Villahermosa, Tabasco, in Southeast Mexico, rehearsed the pieces meeting once a week.

Another group of pathfinders coming from San Luis Potosí, in northeast Mexico, practiced after the Sundays and Wednesdays worship services in their churches, and other days in the afternoons, as their parents took turn to bring them food.

The band comprised of forty members of the Montemorelos University Band (MU), while ninety members of the Mega Band came from various states of Mexico like Baja California, Leon, San Luis Potosí, Sinaloa, Tabasco, Veracruz, Yucatán, and other countries like the United States, Haiti, Cayman Islands, Jamaica, and Martinique.

"It was something new, very special, because many downloaded their music, they enrolled, rehearsed by themselves and then we got together here to rehearse and the result was very good, very nice," said David Aguilar, band director.

During the concert President of Montemorelos University Ismael Castillo, congratulated those who answered the invitation to be part of the Mega Band. He commented that their participation had been a great blessing during the camporee.

Juan Jorge Acuña, Promotion and Recruiting Director of MU and general coordinator of UM Tu Club, said to the actors: "Kids, you are now part of the UM Tu Club's Mega Band, and wherever we would meet and see again, we will invite you. Therefore, continue playing your instrument."

Acuña is hopeful that hundreds will join the Mega Band in Inter-America's IV Pathfinder Camporee to be held in Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic in 2017.

To find out more about UM tu club, go to www.umtuclub.com

"Conquering Giants; I'm fighting the good battle, I know for sure, God will never fail me." Without a doubt, one of the memories that will remain with pathfinders who attended Inter-America's 3rd Pathfinder Camporee will be that lyric from the theme song.

Once the decision was made last year to have a theme song for the event, solicitations were sent out for compositions. Twelve compositions were sent in. The winner was a musical piece presented by brothers Jose and Elio Gomez from the Dominican Republic.

"We believe [this song] is an inspiration from God for this camporee, for all the young people that are going to be here," they said. José Napoleon Gomez, an engineering systems student combines music with his career. He composes musical arrangements and says creating the theme song has been a blessing and privilege for him and his brother.

Elio Nais Gomez, who is in his last year of studying business administration, loves to sing.

"I think it is important to sing because music lifts up the soul and brings us closer to God," he said. "We have decided to give our life to Christ Jesus and through this precious musical ministry, bring other people to Him."

For Melissa Gomez, of the Pegasus Pathfinder Club from Mexico City, who is not related to the Gomez brothers, said the music is what she enjoyed most about the camporee, adding that "it's wonderful to be with young people that believe the same as you do."

The theme song was sung into English, French and Papiamento during the Camporee.

CONQUERING GIANTS
The summit has been prepared for those who are courageous;
those who want to climb the heights and succeed in reaching their goals.
I will be enlisting, Jesus is my future; I'm not fearful,
because God is always with me.

Chorus:
I am conquering giants;
I'm fighting the good battle.
I know for sure, God will never fail me.
I am conquering giants, and like David defeated Goliath,
God will give me the victory.

I will not stay behind. I must be in the frontline
No matter what things I will have to deal with.
I know that I'll succeed in the name of Jesus Christ,
with the shield of truth in my hands and with the banner of the faith.

To listen to the theme song visit www.camporee.interamerica.org
Pastor Eliezer Melendez is honored by Montemorelos University leaders for his pioneer work with youth ministries in Mexico. The event took place during Inter-America’s 3rd Pathfinder Camporee, held Apr. 19-23, 2011.

The Alumni department of Montemorelos University pinned a special button on Pastor Melendez and wife Gloria as honorary alumni.

The Doulos Pathfinder Club, Inter-American’s largest club from Montemorelos University Church, paid tribute to Pastor Eliezer Melendez last Friday at the 3rd territory-wide camporee in Mexico City. Pastor Melendez was a founder of the Doulos Club and youth pastor of Montemorelos University Church.

During the tribute, Juan Perez, a former director of the Doulos Club, thanked Pastor Melendez on behalf of the group.

“We are very thankful for the vision you had to create the club in the 1970s,” said Perez. He added that Pastor Melendez also “committed himself to continue holding up the flame of the Pathfinder spirit in Montemorelos University Church through this club.” Two members of the club presented Pastor Melendez with a special T-shirt. He and his wife of 53 years, Gloria, were also pinned as honorary alumni graduates of Montemorelos University.

“There are no words to express what I have in my heart and mind, because we only stayed at the university for two years, but they were wonderful years,” said Mrs. Melendez. She added that their children also enjoyed their time there.

A native of Puerto Rico, Pastor Melendez graduated from Colegio Adventista de las Antillas in Cuba and from Andrews University in Michigan, the United States. He has worked as a youth pastor and primary school teacher. Later on, he became director of the youth, education and family life departments in the Puerto Rico Conference, and following that he filled the same position at the Antillean Union.

In 1970, Pastor Melendez was called to serve in the Mexican Union as youth, education, and family life director until 1978. From there he moved to Montemorelos University as the first youth pastor of the university church. In the late 1970s he was appointed to the presidency of the Mexican Union but declined in order to continue in his work as youth pastor. It was during that time that the Doulos Pathfinder Club was created. Initially the club's name was “León Azteca.” Later, it was renamed Doulos, a Greek word meaning "servant."

In 1980, Melendez returned to Antillean Union as youth and family life director. He held that position until 1998 when he was appointed youth director for the Inter-American Division (IAD), where he retired in 2001. He said his passion has always been, and always will be, to work for the young people of the church. He appealed to each one gathered to continue getting ready for the camporee that will take place in heaven.

“Jesus is there,” he said. "He is our Master Guide."

Pastor Melendez has attended 962 youth camporees.

Pastor Hiram Ruiz, the current youth pastor of Montemorelos University Church, thanked God for Pastor and Gloria Melendez and for the inspiration and legacy they left. He also expressed gratitude for being a link in the chain they began.

Alba de Collins, public relations director of Montemorelos University Church, presented a token to Pastor and Mrs. Melendez on behalf of the university. Collins reminisced on the time she and her now husband took the Doulos Club to the first territory-wide camporee in 1983 in Oaxtepec, Mexico. "We love you very much and will never forget you in Mexico," Collins said to Pastor and Mrs. Melendez.

In honor of Pastor Melendez and his legacy in Mexico, the camporee’s general meeting site at Ciudad Deportiva was named “Eliezer Melendez Auditorium” during the five-day event.

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